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AN OUTLINE  
OF THE  
HISTORY OF  
ENGRAVING.

BY WILLIAM McLENNAN.

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**I**N deciding on the form in which it appeared best to present my subject, I thought it more advisable to attempt a general sketch of the history of Engraving than an account of any particular school of artists or any one branch of the art—I have found such an abundance of material in the works of Dr. Willshire, Jackson and Chatto, Scott, Lalanne, Hammerton and others, that it has been most difficult to condense—and I crave your forbearance, if I have been unable to combine with the technical history of the art the human interest in the struggles and lives of the artists to a sufficient degree to make the subject as attractive as it deserves.

As the time will not allow of anything more than an outline, we will sketch the history and methods of Engraving in its two broad and natural divisions, Engraving on wood and Engraving on metal. And as a definition of the essential differences of each will use the often quoted one of Mr. Ruskin—"In metal Engraving you cut ditches fill them with ink, and press your paper into them. In wood Engraving you leave ridges, rub the tops of them with ink and stamp them on your paper." This is the clearest and most concise explanation of these two divisions of Engraving I know of and is well worth remembering.

The process of Engraving on wood is briefly as follows:—

After long careful drying small sections of the wood are cut *across* the grain, forming blocks the usual size of which is not more than four or five inches square—The design can be either drawn on paper and transferred to the wood, or as is generally done, drawn on the block itself—The engraver then cuts away all the blank parts leaving the

design in relief. The statement just made concerning the smallness of the blocks may naturally suggest the question, "But how are the large wood cuts produced, such as we see every day?" There are here two prints and if you will look carefully along the red lines which I have ruled, you will find in many places a white line parallel with the red, this is the mark of the divisions of the small blocks, which are clamped firmly together, thus forming a surface sufficiently large for the artist to draw his picture on. When this is completed the blocks are separated and given to different engravers, each of whom engraves his own block following carefully every line of the drawing. In this way the work is rapidly done, and when the fastening of the blocks is perfect, no divisions can be discovered. It must not be supposed, however that this invention is an outgrowth of the demand for the large and elaborate wood cuts of our weekly illustrated papers, for there is an engraving of Pharaoh and his Host after Titian executed about the end of the 16th century by Domenico dalle Greche on several blocks which when united gave a picture of more than six feet in length.

The next step is the printing, which was formerly done directly from the block itself—but to-day (unless it be for some *edition de luxe* of which the number is limited,) the wood block itself is never used. Under the heavy pressure of the printing press the finer parts of the engraving would soon become obliterated and the slightest warping of the wood renders the block very liable to cracking. To escape these disadvantages recourse is now had to the electrotype which is a fac-simile of the engraved block in copper: this is fastened on a heavy metal base and is entirely free from the accidents the more brittle wood is liable to—The number of impressions also that can be taken in this way is very great and should the electrotype become worn another can be taken as perfect as the first—It is by these means that we see Scribners' issuing a portfolio of

*proofs* of wood cuts at the end of the year, of which thousands of impressions have already been printed.

And this art of Wood Engraving, the chief process of which I have rapidly described, is said to have been known and practised in China, nearly a thousand years ago, that in 952 A. D. certain canonical books were engraved and printed by order of the Emperor—This Engraving seems to have been the same as that used in Germany for Block Books—the characters representing words were drawn on sheets of paper and pasted on the face of the block, the engraver cut away all the parts untouched by the ink leaving the written characters, supported by the wood, in high relief—the paper was then washed off and the block inked and impressions taken, probably by rubbing.

However this may be, the first *undisputed* date we have forming part of a wood cut is 1423. This is part of the inscription or legend, engraved in gothic characters, at the bottom of a print of St. Christopher bearing the Infant Christ on his shoulders, and usually known as "The Buxheim St. Christopher" It is so called because it was discovered at the Convent of the Chartreuse of Buxheim in 1769 by Heinecker the keeper of the Prints at Dresden. He found it pasted within the right hand side of a "Laus Virginis," which was completed in 1417, and within the left hand side of the same binding was another wood cut, an Angelic Salutation, which is supposed to have been executed at the same time.

The manuscript with the two cuts was purchased by the father of the present Earl Spencer early in this century and is now in the celebrated Library at Althorp. An uncoloured reproduction of the St. Christopher and a reduced copy of the Salutation are shown this evening.

There has been some doubt thrown on the genuineness of the St. Christopher and any one interested in the question will find a very full statement of the views advanced by both

sides in Dr. Willshire's "Introduction to the Study of Ancient Prints."

There are prints which bear internal evidence of a greater age than this, but with the exception of the one known as "The Brussels Print" they are undated, and this exception is regarded with great suspicion as the last figures of the date (1418) have been pencilled over and some believe they have been changed. However, the moving of a date back a few years, as it may very possibly be done when more minute researches are made, can make but little effect on our appreciation of Engraving as an art as it was not until after the middle of the 15th century that it really began to live.

The earliest Engravings that we know are *supposed* to be impressions from wood blocks (I use the word *supposed* because it has been held by some that many of these early works are impressions from metal plates engraved in relief. These prints present the combined effects of the work of the engraver and the colourist. The former engraved such parts of the block as were to appear outlined in black, leaving the rest blank, this was then filled in with colour, the back ground supplied, and the garments or figures ornamented as the taste of the colourist might direct; and this explains some of the curious phenomena that are occasionally seen in old prints, such as a group of trees apparently without support or a building suspended in the air. It is not that the engraver was deficient in drawing or moved by a sense of the grotesque, but simply that such a print is unfinished, wanting the art of the colourist to fill in the parts left blank for his share of the work. An example of this is shown in the copy of The Salutation, where the body of the Virgin, uncovered by the mantle appears unclothed.

The usual subjects that employed the engraver's skill in the beginning, of the art were, as Mr. Scott says "either effigies of the Virgin and Saints on the one hand or playing cards, the "devil's books," on the other." Into the history

of these playing cards about which there has been a great deal of controversy we cannot enter, they are of the greatest rarity and eagerly sought after by collectors,—at the sale of the Weigel collection four of these cards engraved by the Master E. S. sold for £ 250.

The cuts of Our Saviour, the Virgin or other sacred personages were distributed on holy days, or sold at fairs, to the common people, and in addition to the figure a few words of a prayer or of explanation were engraved on the block and printed with the picture. These cuts were collected and sewn together, and by the gradual growth of the printed matter we have the Block Book : so called because the whole page was printed from *one* engraved block and not from moveable type. The fac-similes shown this evening represent two pages of such a book but without the initial letters inserted, you will notice the large spaces left for them at the sides, whether the two initials (S. & P.) represented at the bottom of the sheet are from wood blocks or copies of letters drawn by hand I am unable to say. This custom of painting in the initial letters (an imitation of the manuscript) continued long after the invention of printing, an example is shewn in the Nuremberg Chronicle. The latest book I have seen with the spaces left for initials is a small quarto edition of Terence printed by Stephanus in 1534.

A small (or to use the printer's term "lower case") letter was usually printed in the blank space to avoid mistake by the draughtsman.

The early engravers worked with very nearly the same tools and practically in the same manner as the engraver of to-day. Many of the authorities say that the printing press was unknown to the first engravers and the transfer of the ink from the block to the paper was effected by laying the paper on the inked block and passing over it a rubber or "frotten" until the impression was taken. But from the extreme accuracy of the impressions of most of these early

prints and the absence of any signs of a glaze on the back such as would be produced by friction, Dr. Willshire is of the opinion that a press was used, and that many, if not all, of these early prints were printed and not rubbed.

The press was certainly adopted shortly afterwards, and from this time forward it is wonderful how little change there has been in the methods used. It is true that the early engraver usually worked on the *flat* side of the wood, and pear-tree wood was the best material he knew (this wood is only used now for common work.) but even with this disadvantage he did work so fine and produced curves so perfect that they are difficult to imitate to-day *across* the grain which presents a harder and more even surface. Even after the press was generally adopted, great difficulties were encountered in printing, the paper was so hard and rough that it did not take the ink evenly, and although fine impressions could be produced on vellum, it was expensive and very often a piece which looked perfectly good would prove to be greasy and produce a blurred and useless impression.

Nearly every invention, commonly supposed to be modern, seems to have been at least anticipated at an early stage in the history of the art. Many of these were not generally used on account of the difficulties, and others simply because engravers directed their attention from Wood Engraving to Engraving on Metal.

A large number of these supposed inventions have been attributed to Bewick (whom we will notice further on) such as the lowering of certain parts of the block in order to obtain a lighter impression for the finer work, but Mr. Scott asserts this was practised by Altdorfer, one of the Little Masters who died in 1538. Another less hazardous means of obtaining this difference of pressure is used to-day, technically known as *overlaying*, I cannot attempt an explanation of this intricate process as it involves too long a description, but

any one interested in the printing of woodcuts, (and this is a most important part of the art,) will find two articles in the April and May numbers of Scribner's Magazine of last year by Theodore De Vinne, the most eminent of American woodcut printers, giving a very full history of the improvement, "The Growth of Woodcut Printing." This process of "overlaying" was known and practised in the 16th century

There was a style of Engraving known as *la manière criblée* at first used by engravers on metal, which consisted in punching out holes of various sizes in the plate, producing a curious dotted effect; this was adopted by wood engravers to relieve the unpleasing greyness of tint in backgrounds, a result of the weak presses then in use. This method is used today for astronomical plates, no better means having been discovered to represent stars in a black space.

In the three examples of *la manière criblée* shown this evening, the first is the best, as the entire picture is formed by the small holes punched out, the second is a mixed example the greater part of which is in this manner but the grass and shrubs and also some of the figures are cut out with a graving tool. In the printer's mark to the "Imitatione Christi" we have an example of *la manière criblée* used as a back ground. You will notice in the last two examples and also in many initial letters of old books that the designs are produced in white on a black ground. This is directly opposite to the effects usually produced by the wood engraver, as it is by means of the parts which he cuts away that white lines are produced. Bewick fully recognized the effectiveness of this and it is largely used in the wood cuts of to-day.

The art of Engraving on wood rose rapidly into favour and the great artists of the day employed it, but in the first decade of the 16th century it had reached its height and from this time fell rapidly into decay and soon almost passed out of existence as an art. Jackson, in his elaborate history of

Wood Engraving speaks of some good work being done in England early in the 17th. century and gives a remarkable example in a cut called "The good Howsholder" but this is only an exception. It was not until the latter half of the last century that people began to recognize that this "lost art" was capable of fine effects by the beauty and truthfulness of the work of an Englishman, whose genius was his guide, his education the observing of nature—Thomas Bewick. The improvements he introduced were many and his work was the needed incentive to a new school of engravers who grew up under his leadership and today the art of Engraving on wood, holds its true place among its sister branches. Bewick only died in 1828 so you can judge how long the revival was in coming and how rapid the progress has been. An article on his life and work was published in Harper's Magazine in 1878,—I think in the November number, and to this or to his autobiography I must refer you for details that cannot fail to be of interest. We have noticed some of the important methods which he re-discovered, and from his time forward, Wood Engraving has been done across the grain of the wood, and boxwood substituted for pear tree. He used the white line constantly and effectively, and utterly discarded cross-hatching which he regarded as a waste of time. To understand the difficulties of producing the effect of cross-hatching in a wood cut it must be remembered that the little lozenges formed by the lines crossing each other must be all carefully cut out by the engraver, and in examining modern wood cuts one notices how rarely this is used, if at all, it is usually the crossing of the *white* lines, the result of straight cutting. A good example of this is shown in the head of Cardinal Manning, No. 157.

Wood-Engraving stands at present in its old honourable position and if it be used to produce the artistic effects to which it is best adapted, there is no reason why it should not retain it. But these effects are dis-

tinct from those produced by other methods and are in consequence well defined and limited. For example, when an Engraver on wood attempts to produce a mezzotint effect by scraping the block, he is not using a legitimate means to obtain his effect and no matter how pleasing or effective a picture he may produce, it cannot be considered as a fine *wood cut*; but merely as a clever imitation on wood of one the processes of engraving on metal. The American magazines seem to have ushered in a new departure in this branch, and although the effect is often admirable, from an artistic point of view, one cannot but regret to see an art which has held as high a position as Wood engraving so entirely distorted.

The change from Engraving on Wood to Engraving on Metal was an almost imperceptible one, as at one time we find celebrated engravers employing both methods, each to produce its own effect. One of the chief reasons of the decay of Wood Engraving was the great difficulty of obtaining good impressions of blocks that were elaborately engraved. A taste for elaboration had arisen and the wood engraver in endeavouring to imitate the fineness and finish of engraving on metal produced blocks which there were no adequate means of printing in a manner that would give the same effect. It was soon recognized that the elaborate finish that was within the natural limits of metal could only be indifferently attempted on wood at a great expense of time, and the rising generation of engravers applied themselves to the substance best suited to produce the effects which were demanded by the public, and Wood Engraving gave place to Engraving on Metal, which soon after the beginning of the 16th century for a long interval entirely superseded it.

The various methods of Engraving on metals have found champions ever ready to assert the superiority of their particular favourite over all others. But like most good things

which enthusiasts see fit to debase into hobbies the result is often the reverse of beneficial. Mr. Hammerton gives a good example of this in the old printer who made his distinction between an engraving and an etching, calling the first "finished" and the later "unfinished," an etching, by Rembrandt was no more to him than an attempt at the more perfect work of the engraver. The truth of course lies midway and it is only when one recognizes that each branch has certain limitations as well as certain possibilities that a just appreciation of the merits of each can be arrived at.

It was some time before copper was accepted as the metal best adapted for Engraving, and many attempts were made from time to time to find other substances which might offer greater facilities to the engraver. It is said that the original plate of the small Crucifixion by Albert Dürer was of pure gold and engraved for the sword hilt of the Emperor Maximilian. The plates for the edition of Dante published at Florence in 1481 are supposed to have been engraved on silver, and this metal was not infrequently used by the early Italian Engravers. Dürer etched on iron plates and also on some soft composition resembling pewter.

There is shown a copy of the English translation of Orlando Furioso by John Harrington "Imprinted at London by Richard Field dwelling in the Black Friars by Ludgate, 1591," and in the "Advertisiment to the reader before he reade" it is stated "As for the pictures they are all cut in brasse, and most of them by the best workmen in that kind, that have bin in this land this many yeares; yet I will not praise them too much. because I gave direction for their making, and in regard thereof I may be thought partial; but this I may truly say, that (for mine own part) I have not seen any made in England better, nor (indeed) any of this kind in any book, except it were a treatise set forth by that profound man Master Broughton the last yeare upon the Revelation, in which they are some three

"or four pretie pictures (in octavo) cut in brass very workmanly. As for other bookes that I have seen in this Realme, either in Latine or English with pictures . . . all their figures are cut in wood and none in metall, and in that respect inferiour to these, at least (by the old proverbe) the more cost the more worship."

Steel is the most modern of all and was not used until the beginning of this century.

It is probable that some of the very early engravings generally supposed to be wood cuts, were in reality done on metal plates engraved in relief in the manner of an engraving on wood but in tracing the history of engraving on metal we will take as a beginning the first dated print which is undisputed. This is a "Flagellation" dated 1446. It is believed to be one of a series of seven prints of the Passion, and from the treatment is probably the work of a goldsmith engraver of the school of Upper Germany.

This was followed very shortly afterwards by the discovery of Maso Finiguerra a goldsmith and niello worker of Florence, who in 1452 produced an impression on paper of a Pax, on which he had engraved the Coronation of Our Blessed Lady, for the Corporation of the Merchants of Florence intended for the Church of San Giovanni. The original niello of this very Pax is still preserved in the Royal Gallery at Florence.

This work in niello was a part of the goldsmiths art and consisted in engraving on small metal plates usually of silver, arabesques, and sometimes pictures: the lines of the engraving were filled with a black composition which on being heated, softened enough to fill them regularly and afterwards hardened like an enamel, the plate was then highly polished and used for ornamental purposes, such as votive tablets, sacred vessels or sheaths for weapons. In order to obtain a copy or proof of the work before filling in the niello a mould was

taken in clay, from this a cast in sulphur was made and, by filling in the lines a perfect copy of the original work was obtained. By some accident, of which many different accounts are given, Finiguero discovered that an impression could be produced by filling in the engraved lines with colour and placing paper over the plate. These impressions are extremely rare, most of them unique, as they were taken only as *proofs* and not multiplied as engravings. There are probably not more than a thousand such prints in existence and they always command high prices. As early as 1824 a Virgin surrounded by Angels and Saints sold for 300gs. and in 1872 at a sale in Stuttgart a fine copy of the Adoration of the Magi by Finiguero brought £330. Thus showing that the value of these specimens has been fully recognized, for during the last 50 years the value of most engravings has increased enormously. These nielli are usually of a very small size rarely exceeding five inches in height.

Through the kindness of Mr. Kingsford of Ottawa we have an opportunity of seeing Ottley's magnificent reproductions of this curious work. The example shown is a fac-simile of the work of Finiguero and is a representation of the niello as it appeared when finished by the artist: examples of prints taken from nielli plates are given in the same work.

It must be borne in mind that nearly all descriptions of Engraving on metal although differing widely in their effects and manner of working, have the same general distinction from Engraving on wood, namely, in metal the lines intended to reproduce the design are cut *into* the plate and *filled* with ink, instead of being left in relief.

The terms "Copper" or "Steel" Engraving indicate the material on which the design is worked, while "Line Engraving," "Etching" "Mezzotint" and the like, the *manner* or method of the Engraving.

The design for a Line Engraving is first traced on transparent paper and transferred to the metal plate and the outline thus obtained is either etched or lightly pointed in. You will notice in the engraver's tracing for the portrait of Gen. Dalyell how carefully this is done, every line being exactly in its proper position for the engraver. In the trial proof of Lear in the Storm 15 (a) we have an example of the first work of the engraver, and No. 15 (b) shows the same plate in a finished condition.

The Engraver works with small lozenge shaped tools which plough up the metal and in the hands of a skilful artist produce most exact and regular curves. A Line Engraving, strictly speaking, is one in which only regular and unbroken lines are used and although this is *par excellence* the classical manner of Engraving it may be pushed to an extreme, as is shewn in No. 16, a reduced copy of Claude Melan's great *tour de force*, a head of Christ, engraved in a single unbroken line beginning at the tip of the nose. In the print of the Dying Gladiator by Andrea Rossi, the effect is entirely obtained by paralld lines drawn diagonally from left to right. The shading in both these examples is produced by strengthening the lines in the required places.

Such works may be regarded by some as extravagancies, merely examples of the cunning of the engraver's skill: but we cannot complain of too great an observance of the purity of line engraving to-day, as an example without a little etching or mezzotint thrown in, is rarely seen. The cause of this seems to be the demand for cheap engravings which simulate the elaboration of fine and consequently expensive prints and in order to supply this demand the publisher issues prints that are often a most unhappy combination of methods entirely unsuited to each other.

Another feature of modern Engraving is the introduction of mechanical means by which skies or backgrounds are

ruled in with a regularity and speed that would have been thought *miraculous* by the engraver of the past or perhaps more in harmony with the superstitious spirit of the age he might use a different adjective, *diabolical*. To give some idea of the application of the older engravers Christian Fredrick von Müller, who carried into the present century the traditions and devotion of the classical school of line engraving, worked for six entire years on his great engraving of the Sixtine Madonna, and spite of failing health lavished on this one plate all his wonderful skill until it was completed to his satisfaction. He then sent it to the publisher at Dresden, who regarding it merely in its commercial aspect, returned it with the request that he would engrave some of the parts more heavily, as much of the work was too delicate to stand more than a very limited number of impressions. The disappointment was so great that he died on the day when the plate was printed from, and the proof which was sent for his approval hung over his coffin.

A fine effect in this style of Engraving is obtained by a judicious combination of "Line and Point" *i. e.* where high lights are required the abruptness of ending in a pure line is softened by means of short broken lines and these again by points: a very good example of this is shown in the portrait of Theodoric by Cornelius Visscher.

We now come to another great division of Engraving on Metal which at least by name is familiar to every one; but unfortunately there has been such a careless use of the word, that Etching, to very many people means no more than a pen and ink drawing.

It is surely unnecessary to do more than draw your attention to this as every one will readily acknowledge that a pen sketch can no more be an etching because the effects are to some extent similar, than a chromo can be a painting. To show the difference I have placed side by side a pen and ink copy of Mr. Jefferson as Bob Acres, an exact imita-

tion of the original, and an etching of Lalanne's which has all the lightness of a sketch from nature.

Etching, like line engraving and niello was used for the ornamenting of arms and metal work long before it was discovered that impressions of such work could be taken on paper.

The adaptation of Etching to the uses of Engraving has been variously attributed to Albert Durer, Lucas von Leyden and others of the early masters, but there still exist three prints (one of which is in the National Gallery) from a plate etched by Wenzel von Olmutz bearing the date 1496 and the title "Roma Caput Mundi"

Bearing in mind that in all those branches of metal engraving which employ lines, the first step is the incising of the design on the plate, Etching has this essential difference, the design is incised not by the engraving tool but by the chemical action of an acid. A polished metal plate is covered with a thin soft varnish through which the design is traced by the etching point thus laying bare the metal to the action of the acid which is afterwards applied.

After the acid has remained sufficiently long to effect its work the plate is carefully cleaned and printed from. But should the lines be too faint or certain parts require to be more deeply acted on, a *transparent* varnish is once more applied through which every line of the former biting can be seen and the etcher lays bare such parts as require further action of the acid. In No 18 the first impression is decidedly weak, but on turning over the print (on the back of which the etcher has by some chance printed the second impression) we see that the plate has undergone a further biting and a marked improvement.

Some idea of the anxiety of the etcher and the difficulties of the process may be learned by reading the amusing preface by Charles Blanc to Lalanne's "Traité de la Gravure à l'eau forte."

This art rose to great perfection in the hands of such men as Rembrandt, Van Dyck, and others, and within the last twenty years has undergone a remarkable revival, and been brought to great perfection in France and England. The principal art periodicals are largely, and some entirely illustrated by this process and the announcement that etching will be employed in an *edition de luxe* adds greatly to its popularity. From the rapidity of its execution and the beauty of the effect it offers special attractions to those who are prevented by other occupations from undertaking the long technical training that all other branches of engraving require. It has had many distinguished amateurs not only as collectors but as artists Mme. de Pompadour, Don Alphonso of Portugal, the King of Sweden and some members of our own Royal Family have followed it with enthusiasm.

The following distinction is taken from Maberly's well known "Print Collector."

"Etchings will generally be found to be the original designs of the Engravers, and in many cases struck off at once, exhibiting all the spirit of original first thoughts and all the freedom for which the playful facility of the etching needle gives opportunity and scope. On the other hand the prints to which the term "Engraving" is applied will generally be found to be translations ("copies" is neither the word nor thing) "translations of works originally executed in painting and now transferred to the copper by the laborious and mechanical skill of the patient worker with the burin. An Engraving thus limited in its meaning may be considered to personate the art in her full attire of ceremony and state. The etching shews art at her ease, art in dishabille, perhaps, but never a slattern; only throwing off much of the restraint and stiffness to which she is on high days, subjected."

We now come to an entirely different method of Engraving

on metal from those which we have already mentioned, and before we notice its history it may be well to speak of the process.

A plate is prepared by rocking over it an instrument which raises an evenly roughened surface, so that if the plate were then printed from an perfect black of even depth would be produced.

On this roughened plate the design is transferred and the Engraver produces his effect by means of scraping and burnishing tools, so that the design is made by a succession and soft and beautifully blended shadings. The purest mezzotints are absolutely without lines of any kind but, etching is often used in connection with mezzotint to give a sharpness to such parts as require it. A good example of a print containing an almost equal division of mezzotint and etching may be seen in Turner's "Ben Arthur" No. 121 in the body of the Catalogue, the etching is by Turner and the mezzotint by Lupton.

Chiefly through the assertion of Horace Walpole the discovery of this process was long ascribed to Prince Rupert that gallant soldier and courtier who combined with these qualities those of an amateur in art matters and a student of the natural sciences. But it is now well established that the inventor was Ludwig Von Siegen a native of Holland who in August 1642 produced the first mezzotint portrait, that of Amelia Elizabeth, Widow Regent of Hesse Cassel. He preserved his secret strictly for about 12 years when he confided it to Prince Rupert whom he met at Brussels. The Prince took great interest in the new method and in turn imparted the secret, under, however, promise of absolute silence to Wallerant Vaillant, a native of Lisle who prepared his plates for him. After this the method got abroad and was eagerly adopted in the Low countries and also in England, where it was practised by the Dutch artists settled in the country, and the best English engravers, so enthusias-

tically that the process became known on the continent as *la manière Anglaise*.

Dr. Willshire says, "the founders of this branch of art had 'blue blood in them. Ludwig Siegen Von Sechten was of noble family (he was a page to the young prince of Hesse Cassel and held the rank of Lieutenant Colonel); "then came "Prince Rupert, a Duke and Admiral of England—Fürsten-berg Canonicus Capitularis Monguntiae et Spirae Colonellus; "Von Eltz, of course a gentleman; Evelyn (?) a well known "thinker and courtier; Sir Christopher Wren; Sir Ralph "Cole; with Luttrell of New Inn, and Francis Place, a gentleman amateur."

This manner of Engraving is chiefly used for portraits on account of the wonderful softness that can be obtained; although at one time night scenes and moonlight effects were favourite subjects, the trees and lighter parts are generally too soft and woolly to have a natural appearance.

There are of course many *combinations* of these principal methods of engraving and also other methods such as Stipple and Aquatint capable of producing fine effects which I have not had time to notice.

We have now hastily glanced at the principal methods of Engraving on wood and metal, and I repeat the historical order with the dates.

1. The 1st dated wood cut is "The Buxheim St. Christopher" of 1423, engraved in Germany.

2. The 1st dated engraving on metal is a Flagellation the work of an unknown Goldsmith Engraver of the Upper German School, dated 1446.

3. The first piece of Niello work printed from was a Pax of Maso Finiguerra of Florence in 1452.

4. The first known etching is a historical design entitled "Roma Caput Mundi" and the work of a German, Wenzel von Olmutz in 1496.

5. The first mezzotint a portrait of Amelia Elizabeth Widow Regent of Hesse Cassel by Ludwig von Siegen in 1642.

Perhaps I may seek to avoid some of the criticisms to which this sketch is open by stating that the descriptions of the processes which I have given are drawn from standard authorities and not from my personal experiments or observation. To collectors especially those who have had experience I cannot attempt to give any advice but perhaps it may not seem presumptuous if I suggest to any who are beginning, that it is never good policy to buy a poor impression, knowing it to be such, of even a rare print; one is always dissatisfied with it, and often the expense of a poor impression prevents the purchase of something more desirable: and again, *never cut off the margin about a print* if it is unsightly, mount the print carefully and cover the torn or stained margin with a *passe partout*, because, if the print is of any value, an inch or two of margin may make a wonderful difference, if it should ever come to the hammer. I am greatly indebted to Mr. Kingsford for many of the specimens which I have used to illustrate this paper and to the kindness of the committee of the present Exhibition for the arrangements they have made for my convenience.

This being an introductory paper on this subject, in tracing the history and describing the processes of the principal methods of Engraving I could hardly avoid dealing with dates and technical detail to an extent that must have appeared uninteresting to many: but if this sketch may make it easier for some future lecturer to elaborate his treatments of some particular branch of this subject with adequate fulness of detail, and awaken your sympathies with the human interest in the personality of the artists you will find your reward for the patience with which you have this evening honoured me.

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